

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2 and 5-26 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 15 and 25 are amended. Support for the amendments to claims 1, 15 and 25 can be found in the specification, for example, Table 1-2 on page 24. No new matter is added.

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 13-16, 21, 22, 24 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 5,818,808 to Takada et al. (Takada). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 1, 15 and 25 each recite that the second power level P1 is smaller than the third power level Pm. Takada does not teach or suggest this feature.

The Office Action alleges that the reading power level Pr and the bias power level Pb disclosed by Takada correspond to the second power level P1 and the third power level Pm, respectively, as recited in claims 1, 15 and 25. Applicants respectfully disagree with this allegation.

Takada discloses a recording power level Pw, and an erasing power level Pe, a bias power level Pb, and a reading power level Pr. See Takada, Figs. 3-5. However, the reading power level Pr of Takada does not correspond to the second power level P1 as alleged by the Office Action. Takada's erasing power level Pe corresponds to the second power level P1 as recited in claims 1, 15 and 25. For example, Takada discloses "[t]he crystallization, i.e., erasing is performed ..." (emphasis added) at col. 1, lines 51-54. The present specification, at paragraphs [0020] and [0044], discloses that the second power level P1 indicates the "crystallization level" when the information-recording medium is a phase change recording medium.

However, Takada explicitly teaches at column 10, lines 2-4, that the bias power level Pb is greater than 0 and equal to or less than the erasing power level Pe, i.e., Pe is greater than

Pb. Accordingly, Takada does not teach or suggest that the erasing power level P_e is smaller than the bias power level P_b , the alleged bias power level. Thus, Takada does not disclose the second power level P_1 smaller than the third power level P_m , as recited in independent claims 1, 15 and 25.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, claims 1, 15 and 25 are patentable over Takada. Further, claims 2, 7, 8, 13 and 14 which depend from claim 1, and claims 16, 21, 22 and 24, which depend from claim 15, are also patentable over Takada, for at least the reasons discussed above, as well as for the additional features they recite. Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is thus respectfully requested.

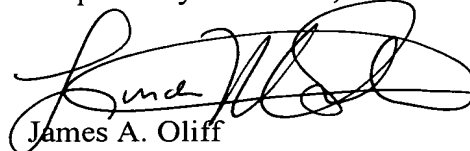
The Office Action rejects claims 5, 6, 9-12, 17-20, 23 and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Takada. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Takada does not teach or suggest each and every feature of claims 1, 15 and 25. Therefore, claims 5, 6, 9-12, 17-20, 23 and 26 are allowable at least for their dependence on claims 1, 15 and 25, respectively, as well as for the additional features they recite. Withdrawal of this rejection is thus respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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